

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2007-26-WS - ORDER NO. 2007-682
OCTOBER 10, 2007

IN RE: Brenda Bryant,)	ORDER DISMISSING
)	COMPLAINT
Complainant/Petitioner)	
)	
v.)	
)	
Carolina Water Service, Inc.)	
)	
Defendant/Respondent.)	

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (“Commission”) on the complaint of Brenda Bryant, a Carolina Water Service, Inc. (“CWS”) customer, claiming that CWS overcharged her for water usage. A hearing on Bryant’s complaint was held in the Commission’s offices on July 26, 2007. In addition to the named parties, the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff (“ORS”) was the only other party of record. No other parties intervened.

Prior to the hearing, on March 3, 2007, CWS filed a motion to dismiss Bryant’s claim. By Commission Directive, dated March 7, 2007, this motion was denied. We now memorialize this ruling and formally deny CWS’s motion.

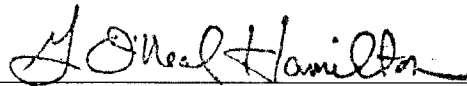
At the hearing, Bryant testified that the bills she received over the course of several months in 2006 did not accurately reflect her water usage, resulting in an overcharge by CWS. The record shows, however, that ORS conducted an investigation

and found that the water meter on Bryant's property was functioning properly. During this investigation, ORS also found no leaks on either side of the meter. In addition, CWS presented testimony that, although Bryant's water consumption was high when compared to other customers, a history of high water consumption by this particular customer indicates that her bill was accurate. Bryant failed to present any evidence that the meter was faulty, inaccurate, or misread.

While the Commission recognizes that Bryant's water consumption was indeed high, this level of water usage alone is insufficient proof to find in her favor given the history of her consumption. We simply cannot infer that the amount she was billed must have been wrong because her water consumption level was unusually high. Without more, Ms. Bryant fails to meet the burden of proof in her case. The Commission therefore finds that Ms. Bryant demonstrated neither that her meter inaccurately measured her water consumption nor that CWS misread her consumption data. As a consequence, we hold that Brenda Bryant is not entitled to relief, and her complaint is dismissed.

This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further order of the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:



G. O'Neal Hamilton, Chairman

ATTEST:



C. Robert Moseley, Vice Chairman

(SEAL)